



# *Another* London

poems from a city still searching for itself

*edited by Andreas Gripp & Carrie Lee Connell*

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Carrie Lee Connel & Andreas Gripp, editors

Harmonia Press

*Another London :  
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Published by Harmonia Press, London, Ontario  
Email: [harmoniapress@hotmail.com](mailto:harmoniapress@hotmail.com)  
Website: [www.harmoniapress.blogspot.com](http://www.harmoniapress.blogspot.com)

Front photo: courtesy of Delta London Armouries Hotel  
Page 1 photo: Andreas Gripp  
Back photo: Andreas Gripp

Text font is Calibri 11pt.

**Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

Another London : poems from a city still searching for itself / various authors ; edited by Carrie Lee Connel and Andreas Gripp.

ISBN 978-1-927734-11-7 (paperback)

1. Canadian poetry (English)--Ontario--London.
2. Canadian poetry (English)--21st century.

I. Connel, Carrie Lee, 1967-, editor II. Gripp, Andreas, editor

PS8295.7.L65A55 2016 C811'.6080971326 C2016-905133-1

## CONTENTS

### *Author / Poem(s)*

Beltrano, Frank

Car Wars	23
The Name of the Numbered Things	54

Burfield, Stan

I am standing on a crate reading Lawrence Ferlinghetti	21
---	----

Connel, Carrie Lee

It's a Simpsons' Sky	27
Beacon	35
This London is not That London	66

Cull, Tom

The Granite into which It Reaches	47
-----------------------------------	----

Elias, D'vorah

Tuesday Morning Sky	40
---------------------	----

Figurski, Jan

At Richmond and Dundas	38
------------------------	----

Gibbs, Ryan

Back to the River	68
-------------------	----

Gripp, Andreas

The City	31
Hamilton Road	45
Lesbian of the Thames	60

Gunn, Gregory Wm.		
The Following	25	
At the Café	56	
Hayter, Martin		
The Elderly Wait in Cherryhill Mall	42	
Heslop, Kevin		
If	52	
Huebert, David		
Grate: Queens and Richmond	39	
Intson, Camille		
\$15 cover	4	
McManus	41	
Kemp, Penn		
The Hart of London	30	
Celebrating Tree in Souwesto	57	
Laplante, Marlene		
Castles are Part of the Dream	53	
Leangvan, Alan		
My Forest City	1	
McCardle, Lincoln		
#LdnOnt>>HWY 401 Error: Not Found<< 33		
morrow, dl		
Ode to a Tree		
and Wordsworth's "little cottage girl"	7	

Nielsen, Dorothy		
Decade		13
Painter, Holly		
My City		70
Ray, Wayne		
Spring Flowers		18
Hippie Trippie General Store		43
There's A Poem Here		62
Raymond, R L		
Hoping for spring		28
Renaud, Brittany		
London Places, London Moments		5
The Adelaide and Commissioners		
Crossroads		36
Western Fair Moments		63
Roffey, Peggy		
And that was the day:		
cross currents everywhichway		19
Tovey, Mark		
The Gazebo		50
White, David		
Morning After Rain,		
Beyond Chelsea St.		10

## PREFACE

A poetry anthology on London, Ontario, by this city's writers has appeared at various times under various titles undertaken by various editors (books such as *London After Midnight*, *Tear the Rust Off My Heart*, and *Possessions: The Eldon House Poems*, to name a few). But in 2016, during a period when our city continues to expand both in population and in square kilometers, we felt that a present-day collection of what it's like to live as a poet or just a person in "The Forest City" was called for. Whether it's the battle over the Springbank Dam (highlighted in R L Raymond's *Hoping for spring*), everyday driving frustrations (Frank Beltrano's *Car Wars*), a first-hand account of a recent, downtown guerilla poetry reading (as showcased in Stan Burfield's *I am standing on a crate reading Lawrence Ferlinghetti*) or a visit to a variety store of sorts in Historic Woodfield (Wayne Ray's *Hippie Trippie General Store*), *Another London* is a series of conflicts and contrasts, of making sense of the present day while acknowledging there was a previous time when residing here may have been more orderly and was questioned much less. Or perhaps it's a way to understand the dichotomy of the love/hate relationship so many of us have with our current hometown, a city named after one much larger, more glamourous, and with a far richer history than our own. Yet because of our humbler size and standing, we clearly have a unique perspective on the world found nowhere else.

Andreas Gripp / Carrie Lee Connel  
Editors, *Another London*



## ALAN LEANGVAN

### My Forest City

I've lived this life under an acquainted section of sky.  
Every teardrop evicted from these eyes  
when my heart felt like a broken home.  
Every serrated piece of young broken heart  
that threatened never to be glued back together  
because "she was my world" ... at the time.  
They all fell towards the same patch of earth.  
When lewd or childish jokes summoned laughter  
from my lungs,  
when my voice fought to recite poetry  
without trembling,  
it echoed between familiar trees.  
Those trees grew tall under that acquainted sky,  
dug roots into that same patch of earth,  
and held it together like community, like family,  
a marriage of life and concrete that I call home.  
A Forest City.

London, Ontario, has always been my favourite oddity.  
A preferred paradox, my lovable oxymoron.  
I could clench my fists, face still red  
from whatever tested my young temper,  
and start walking.  
And like a spell cast from fairy tales,  
mortar and scaffolding  
would become bush and branch.  
The howl of cars becoming faint yawns  
in the wind,

fading much faster than my youthful angst.  
Houses of wood, and trees of steel.  
Lively pavement and silent wilderness.  
Separated by footsteps and a few moments  
of thought.  
A school of fish that know full well  
we have the rest of the ocean.  
But this is our home.  
Our Forest City.

Can go from grey metropolis  
to green sanctuary  
in less time than it takes me to realize  
there are more important things in life.  
More beauty I haven't yet seen.  
I eventually learn to open my eyes.  
My home is patient with me.  
We know we both have growing up to do.  
I love how clouds cushion the sunset  
in this acquainted section of sky.  
I'm grateful to this same patch of earth  
for always holding me up.  
I hope the familiar trees that hold me together  
appreciate my attempts at poetry.  
If you promise to continue listening,  
I promise to keep reading.  
Keep writing.  
Keep loving.  
My Forest City.

## CAMILLE INTSON

**\$15 cover**

i find you like i find  
richmond row moulding in my back left pocket:  
saucy, left cheek to the wind

i think, while the wine is young,  
we may dare break all we know of beat –  
move instead to the untimely syncopation  
of beer glasses breaking

we can go and tango with mud-cloaked park drunks  
then you can spit me out like tobacco and  
bury me  
in the grass by the onion-eyed trash can man or

let's navigate our blocks like we should our throats  
spitting sailor sworn whistle tunes  
like omens on the sidewalk  
blistering heat  
venus fly trapped in webs of flesh and steel

time bleeds.

you smell rotten eggs spread eagle in the dumpster

still i say,  
hold my hand! —  
the sun's not yet risen.

## **BRITTANY RENAUD**

### **London Places, London Moments**

A singular, crumbled brown leaf  
runs along  
the concrete sidewalk of  
the Platts Lane apartment complex,  
sounding like approaching footsteps.

In an alley bringing  
King and York together,  
scrawls, tags, and a full on mural of a carnival  
are the backgrounds to piss and syringes;  
the ground more water-filled potholes than road.  
Sometimes, these are completely hidden by snow.

A city bus,  
bedecked and festooned  
with Christmas lights accompanied by  
'ole Tannenbaum,  
slowly drives down Dundas.

Looking up through a wrought-iron "Victoria  
Park," I see purple clouds, navy blue skies  
and a single star.

A street performer sings "Hallelujah"  
at Wellington and Dundas,  
and the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame  
illuminates itself  
in rainbow colours.

There is a section  
in Mount Pleasant,  
not noticeable to people not looking,

where stuffed animals are laid  
instead of flowers and  
life is measured more often  
in days or weeks  
than years.

Trees keep out the hot air –  
it is restful here.

## dlmorrow

### Ode to a Tree and Wordsworth's "little cottage girl"

I sit  
with Friday lunch  
in my favourite garden chair  
atop the leaf pile my daughter raked.  
Sun naked, beaming now.  
Sky clear as a bell.  
This is the first season that trees are so active,  
communicative  
(In spring and summer, backyard trees slip by us  
rather quietly. They're so quiet, in fact,  
that we forget they might need  
a drink of their own after a few parching days  
in the sun without rain).

I have positioned myself  
so that some leaf offerings from the maple  
might fall onto me in wait.  
I make a febrile attempt  
to communicate my respect  
to the tree telepathically?!

Then one leaf lands on my coat wrist.  
I'm smiling.  
I say I love you.  
It lifts off and drops to the ground.  
I eat. It is good.  
All the while, leaves are falling,

singly and in tiny gusts,  
around me and to the east of me.

Another leaf lands on my coat.  
I say I love you too.  
And on the top of my head.  
I put the 3 leaves together on my lap, then  
I make a collage with them in my left hand  
(At this point, I am still feeling a bit unworthy  
of the tree's presents).

I close my eyes to enjoy the sun.  
I tilt my head up.  
In my mind's eye, I see  
the stem end of a leaf moving  
from left to right in my field of vision,  
the base aflame with red energy.  
When it is gone, I open my eyes  
and lift the ends of the leaf stems to my lips  
to receive any energy they have left for me.  
The phone has not rung.  
I am glad for this uninterrupted repass.  
It reminds me of how I thrive on the quiet.  
I haven't heard much around me through all this  
except intermittent leaf whispers and landings.

Now I hear gentle Greek music.  
Someone has their car window open  
at the corner stoplight.  
I hadn't noticed the traffic or people at all  
during my communion until now.

I make my move to go inside.  
The leaves have started rustling more,  
the wind has started gusting forth  
which surprises me because  
it's getting warmer outside.  
By the time I enter the kitchen and return  
to the backyard with water for the bird bath  
the noon bells have started at the church.

*Gahng      Gahng      Gahng*

*Gahng      Gahng*

I notice *Gahng* many more *Gahng* leaves *Gahng*  
falling *Gahng* than *Gahng* had *Gahng*  
fallen *Gahng*  
while I was sitting  
in their range.

Then a cascade of notes.  
I see in my mind dozens of people  
in random groupings  
exiting the darkened interior  
and billowing out into the light.  
I stand at the screen door  
and listen,  
eyes closed again,  
to hear every note.

Perhaps the forest is so special  
because we know no one  
removes the fallen leaves.  
They are just left to return  
to the soil  
they came from.

Amen.

## DAVID WHITE

### **Morning After Rain, Beyond Chelsea St.**

*for Tom Cull*

Just after the rise of land,  
past the last bend of the Oxbow,  
I turn off Springbank at Kensal Rental  
across from what was once a Baptist Church,  
but now an expensive restaurant  
where I tried the venison last year,  
drive down Chelsea St., houses built after WWII  
accommodating the babies of the Boom,  
but here and there older dwellings,  
once the homes of farmers  
who tilled the soil devoted now to lawns.

Driving past Donna St., north of Malcolm  
but not as far as Pinewood or the Woodland Cemetery,  
an enclave of deer where the last three generations  
of my ancestors are buried,  
I park in the lot by the baseball diamond/soccer field  
above Greenway Pollution Control Centre  
which a sign informs is expanding.  
I used to play here as a child with my Wolf Cub pack,  
went door to door along these streets on Apple Day.

They used to call this South West Optimist Park  
but now the simple marker  
reads Kensal Park which is also the name  
of the public school I went to as a child.  
Now French Immersion is taught there.

My parents would remember  
summer Saturday afternoons,  
driving down to picnic in Springbank Park  
when they were still in high school,  
stopping in Kensal Park for gas,  
or a foot-long hotdog at Eastwoods  
where my father and I would later go to test bulbs  
for the TV set when it wasn't working  
(torn down in 1967, replaced by the Shanghai  
which itself now is looking a little worse for wear).

It rained all through the night (much needed)  
and into the morning, but even now as I walk through  
the well-mown, chalk-lined grass of the playing field,  
my Birkenstocks are dry;  
sun breaking through, a glimpse of blue sky.

I'm looking for a sign somewhere on this field  
I've known all my life,  
something to tell me what once was here  
that I learned about only last night,  
in my sixty-second year,  
a historical plaque, perhaps;  
first discovered in the 1920s,  
but there is nothing,  
nothing to tell me that in this place of my childhood  
there was once, in 1400, an *Attawandaron* village,

pre-contact

– re-discovered in 1988  
after an environmental assessment  
for a PUC gas pipeline.

The site's named after the Norton family  
who farmed the land since the 1800s,  
sold off and turned into a subdivision,  
conforming to the 1950s,  
in those days of black and white.

*Chonnonton*, keepers of the deer,  
as they called themselves,  
evidence of nine longhouses surrounded by palisades,  
a sweat lodge, hearths, storage pits, a midden,  
potshards and clay pipes,  
deer antlers, carbonized corn kernels,  
bits of flint arrow heads.

In childhood, digging in the dirt of the garden,  
I always hoped I'd come upon an arrow head,  
used by someone just passing through.  
I didn't know that, almost in my own backyard,  
they had lived here for several pre-Columbian  
centuries.

## DOROTHY NIELSEN

### Decade

i

Friend, lie still in your grey nest.  
No one can blaze forever.  
We consume ourselves  
then make our depressions  
in the colour of rest – soft ashes  
underneath our shadowless death-  
like sleep, until we wake to rise,  
take flight again.

ii

For you there's something else besides –  
there's broken glass  
that shatters sleep.  
There are variations on a theme:  
voices pleading, raging nights –  
“Swear, swear on these bottles  
that you'll stop forever.”

And you heard her swear  
so you've known for forty years  
how spirits can waylay our best intentions,  
and even words of desperate love  
get torn up on sharp edges.

iii

For me he is spirit now and ashes in a chest.  
My mother left him here in Ontario  
when she went west, bequeathed  
first to a sister.

But he wouldn't be still.  
She woke to noises from the closet.  
So she brought him here  
then called the cemetery  
where we'll lay him at last to rest  
when the ground thaws out a bit.

iv

When I was five I looked up six feet to him,  
raised my arms and he flew me up.  
Later, I sewed myself paper wings  
trying to be a worthy daughter  
to this man high on mind and spirits.  
The air around him was so thin.  
It seared my lungs, melted down my wings,  
and I was grounded.

v

His ashes in the white field  
that will lie fallow  
fed with bones, skin, stones, and him.

vi

New Year's morning, 2005.  
Less than a week ago  
the planets realigned, 200,000 dead.  
Yet at 8 a.m. four jet streams cross the sky  
over my bed in London, Ontario, going west  
and finally I dream.  
How relentlessly high we're bent on flying.

vii

As that old year died,  
I dreamed of oil burning up Baghdad  
then consuming the entire planet.

I saw a mountain cave north of Peking,  
a root cellar in Istanbul,  
a hollow outside Whitehorse,  
the ashen faces of the few  
who outlive our fires.

I saw in a millennium or two  
a dogsled make its way  
to what was London, Ontario.

I saw a thaw, a farmer  
drag a plough through a field  
of what was once bone, skin, stone, and ashes,  
rich earth fed with the spirits  
of unknown ancestors.

In what was once called May  
a shoot rises;  
sweet leaves into the mouths  
of a new race.

viii

Is it in our nature  
to be civilized?  
Sew ourselves wings  
and rise and rise  
until the sun burns us  
and we fall back into the nest?

This one night before you leave the north  
back to Sydney for good  
I toast the New Year in with you,  
having dreamed my way out of depression.  
I raise my glass: “I give the planet fifty years.”  
You raise your bottle: “I give us all a decade.”

We both carry embers  
for sisters who died young  
and parents who washed their loss in spirits  
that fire up their imaginations of the end.

We both hope for their spirits  
to rise above all grief forever,  
yet we agree that, hard as the ground is, now  
is the only moment for us to be.

## WAYNE RAY

### **Spring Flowers**

(for Leanne)

On her journey to the gym  
she dropped off some apples  
at her father's apartment that  
he would add to a composter.  
She was cleaning out her fridge  
where blue beards grew rampant  
and bruises were not her own,  
wine fermenting in old fruit cans  
overseen by Mr. & Mrs. Botulism,  
now mixed with leaves and dirt,  
coffee grinds, worms, and egg shells.

Is there a lesson here?  
Gardening, composting, cleanliness?  
Or, a middle-aged daughter just  
thinking of her over-middle-aged father  
helping to nurture the nature,  
familiarizing the fondness of family,  
loving the longevity of living,  
daughtering the doddering?

On her journey to the gym  
she dropped off some apples,  
locked the empty apartment door,  
smiled. And thought of spring flowers.

## PEGGY ROFFEY

### **And that was the day: cross currents everywhichway**

In their on-again-off-again turbulent coupling,  
El Niño cedes to La Niña, peters out,  
puts his feet up somewhere behind the equator,  
snaps open the newspaper and dozes off,  
leaves weather to her.

But they're mere avatars, that pair,  
of sweeping trade winds  
blowing today as they once blew  
ancient Polynesians, pirates, conquistadors  
around the globe.

Game-changers, these winds –  
but even they are simply traces  
of some magnetic squabble and dance  
in the marriage of earth and sun.

Witnesses, puny and powerless –  
we in this little London town –  
of world's great cosmic spats and tussles  
caught like everyone else as that grand mating  
plays out its celestial repertoire of domestic discord:

A warm June day –  
blue sky graces the noon,  
luscious peony-perfumed breezes  
riffle new leaves, run light-footed over lush grass  
and all you want to do is stretch out in the shine.

Such a day gets roughed up at four  
by gathering bully clouds;  
wild rains pound, soak, vaunt their fullness,  
spill over eaves, make rivers in gutters,  
beat our peonies to the ground 'til ...

Sun reasserts herself,  
shines the torrent out, turns it luminous,  
subdues it for a time before ...  
clouds regather, rains return  
and again sun braves them —

Sky contending so,  
right past dinner and dishes.

Now, sun sleepy, clouds tamed —  
silver whiffs against the fading blue —  
evening falls on clean streets, sated grass;  
birds in the quiet, fresh-scoured air  
sing out, call clear, put the day to rest  
'til they too subside and cede  
to Old South frogs who trill us through the night.

## STAN BURFIELD

### I am standing on a crate reading Lawrence Ferlinghetti

I am here now.

This is no longer an alternate future,  
or someone else's.

I am stretched up tight on this crate  
looking down at these slow-moving bodies,  
my spine hard against the stone edge  
of Starbucks window wall,  
buffeted by wind and buses  
that bellow around this cold corner –  
this dark Richmond and Dundas  
where I would not be.

Yet I am only two barefoot beatnik blocks down  
from *City Lights Bookshop*,  
nicely named for Ferlinghetti's own,  
in 'Frisco way back then.

And now up on the crate I too  
am wearing that F-beard in which he preached  
to his beat colleagues passion for all these dead poor,  
these no fame/no friends,  
these leaning here into the slow tide of the block  
drifting through time's pool,  
out of jail for a while,  
getting by as if free,  
maybe trying to like each other or one or some.

I am calm standing on this crate,  
wearing this body here now  
like someone else's or no one's –

and anyway no one looks at me;  
my eyes are always in the book,  
my ears on my sonorous voice,  
and elsewhere with Ferlinghetti,  
enticing his empathetic, liberal poet friends:

"Let's go,  
come on  
let's go,  
empty out our pockets  
and disappear,  
missing all our appointments ..."

No one hears.  
And these, with no appointments to miss,  
don't care. His friends aren't here.

Even so, we few crate poets,  
yes we have left our safe homes,  
our cars in the overnight lots,  
our cell phones in our pockets,  
and like Ferlinghetti, we do our hour  
up on our soap boxes,  
dropping loud words  
down into the block.

## FRANK BELTRANO

### Car Wars

We are at war  
coming out of the underground  
parking lot  
at the Covent Garden Market  
he to the right of me  
we are both  
troop carriers needing to go left  
a confluence of 3 o'clock convoys  
I edge forward  
to the front  
then he  
then me  
then suddenly –

I decide to surrender  
or maybe it is a strategy  
follow the foe out  
into the fray  
and choose my battles.

But as he gets  
ahead of me  
I see  
“Support the Troops”  
yellow ribbon  
“Highway of Heroes”  
bumper sticker

“Out of work yet?  
Keep buying foreign”  
decal  
cut away bumper  
to facilitate the ramp  
for his wheel-chair-transporting  
assault vehicle.  
I understand  
his love of war.

There is an end to conflict.  
I am at one with the traffic.  
Few days have a name  
more wonderful than Armistice.

## **GREGORY WM. GUNN**

### **The Following**

And in relentless intricacies  
of destiny & atmosphere,  
the wind unwinds and toward  
us turns its attention.

On the Sabbath, I  
walk the unpretentious  
rain-drenched roads  
of holly-green & russet of  
the patchy golden metropolis  
to find a pew position  
in the venerable church  
near the intersection.

Joined with the flock  
in an oblation congregation,  
I concentrate on  
the ivory-white collars  
wrapped around the necks  
of good Samaritans.

We all genuflect in  
abstractness  
of veneration, breathe  
the sandalwood  
fuming incensories.

And I, drifting, am lost  
in the tranquil glimmer  
of the mottled marble,  
glissade into a daydreamer's  
alternate continuum.

## **CARRIE LEE CONNEL**

### **It's a Simpsons' Sky**

When I say it's a Simpsons' sky,  
you know exactly what I mean.

Waiting for the LTC, I stand  
in the shade of a hydro pole,  
the sun dissected,  
trying to peek from either side.  
Why can we never see  
the clouds skitter?

You would think the buffeting  
wind at earth level would  
send the clouds scattering  
but they just hang;

no destination except east,  
perhaps doubling back  
to check out the bikini-clad  
chick in her backyard,

resuming when pushed along  
by those next in line  
who also want to see.

## R L RAYMOND

### Hoping for spring

His ankles hurt  
muck-caked  
heavy with brown grit

he picks between stones  
sifts through old silt –  
rehearsing

upstream  
behind the giant's useless teeth  
rot the dead fish and dead fowl

he drags along  
tripping on bone-white fossils  
the *before-things* he almost remembers

if only the giant could laugh  
or scream ...

his ankles hurt  
he pushes on  
rehearsing

maybe –  
his riddle will be good enough ...  
the old words will be good enough ...

the giant will laugh  
or scream ...

and the floodgates will open  
and they will be saved  
and he will carve the riddle  
in prominence  
on the giant's face

## PENN KEMP

### **The Hart of London**

Late this dappled day, I spot a stray  
young yearling browsing for millet  
beneath our bird feeder. What? We  
live on a closed-off street between  
highways. She arrives as straggler

separated from family and settles  
down under the tangle of rosebush  
for an hour. Then, startled by next  
door's lawn mower, she lopes across

our driveway to nest below the cedars,  
appearing/reappearing tawny through  
yellow leaves and disappearing when  
my attention shifts inside the house.

Pure presence endures despite epithets:  
antlered vermin, garden pest, tree girdler.  
She's our reminder of totem, of clan. How  
alone we are in the wide, wild world. How  
we know sanctuary, when to hide and where.

## ANDREAS GRIPP

### The City

The city you say we hate  
has grown on me now  
and I feel no enmity with it.

And I walked today,  
through the city you say we hate.  
I stepped in snow  
and slipped on ice  
but I didn't really fall –  
a railing there to rescue.

It was cold today, in the city  
you say we hate,  
and the homeless sat  
on sewer grates  
and felt the heat blow up.  
I thought it ranked of methane  
but there wasn't an explosion.

I was accosted,  
in the city you say we hate,  
by a man panning for coins.  
*No change, no change, me no English,*  
*no change*, I shook my head at first,  
then turned and flung two quarters at him –  
from the both of us,  
though I knew you'd disavow.

A fire truck roared past me  
in the city you say we hate.  
Its sirens screamed like murder  
but then that would have been the police  
and there were none at all in sight.

A house must be aflame,  
in the city you say we hate.  
I hope right now it's vacant,  
with a mother and child away,  
shopping, or on a visit to a friend.

If it's you who've befriended,  
tell them not to worry,  
that there's a hydrant  
on the corner where they live;  
that all will be rebuilt  
by kindly neighbours and their kin;  
that they needn't feel embittered,  
blame the gridlock, shunting trains.

Tell them, while you too  
have time to love,  
a little.

## LINCOLN MCCARDLE

### #LdnOnt >>HWY 401 Error: Not Found<<

Simcoe's site surveyed,  
ambling aimlessly along the Thames  
in the morning shadows of Eldon.  
The forest pity: through neighbour and incoherence.  
Attack to the river: forks over lives?

An overwhelming penchant for pessimism,  
bleached by the summer sun  
and muted by clatter and ripple.

Exhaust our core beliefs.  
Herons silhouetted against cranes  
as we prepare to give a dam.  
Slow on rapid transit and at our most innovative  
when finding new and pioneering ways to stand still.

Nary a squelch. A gurgle. Stagnation.

A bridge too far he says and a memory lane  
inexperiencing demolition by neglect.  
No shift to our way of thinking;  
a need to cheque ourselves  
before we wreck ourselves.

Reign of disdain. Urbane in vain.  
Struggle and regress.

Are leaders emerging and innovations working?  
Considering the fair over the final destination.  
Thinking boldly and further into the future  
onto tomorrow's map.

## **CARRIE LEE CONNEL**

### **Beacon**

A beacon on the horizon  
seen from small town four-corners –  
an intersection of childhood and maturity.  
The 401 a yellow-lined road  
to the lighthouse of knowledge.  
Bathed in cloud-reflected orange,  
this treed city boasts a natural charm.  
A stopover for some whose  
roots are embedded elsewhere;  
a full stop for others when home  
was a culturally-deprived shanty town.  
Richmond Row glitters  
not quite so bright as Broadway,  
and yes, the sparkle tarnishes  
with passing years.

## **BRITTANY RENAUD**

### **The Adelaide and Commissioners Crossroads**

The frost followed  
the shadow of  
the guardrail at  
the Adelaide and Commissioners crossroads.  
Green grass exists still  
in February.

I saw a brook today  
I never noticed before  
beyond that guardrail at the end of  
the Adelaide and Commissioners crossroads,  
flowing swiftly  
in March.

A wall of grey  
encapsulates and shrouds  
anything beyond the train tracks  
from view at  
the Adelaide at Commissioners crossroads.  
I see only faded phragmites and skinny poplars  
in April.

No longer does the hill  
fashioning itself a meadow  
dress itself in merely brown or yellow  
beyond that guardrail at the end of  
the Adelaide and Commissioners crossroads

but also deep green and burgundy  
in May.

The yellow and white fuzz balls  
floating through the air  
remind me to sneeze  
as I look beyond the end of  
the Adelaide and Commissioners crossroads.  
I see yellow lights flashing through  
bushes and shrubs so thick  
I can't tell if it comes from  
a backhoe or pickup.  
A neon orange bulldozer stands by  
west side up Commissioners, waiting  
in June.

**JAN FIGURSKI**

**At Richmond and Dundas  
(waiting at the bus stop)**

white and t-shirt  
his swagger enough  
bowl over garbage cans  
hand in hand-cuffed  
he, the declaration booming  
from his thrust-out chest,  
and she, the soon to be  
little woman  
crowding the jewelry shop window

## DAVID HUEBERT

### **Grate: Queens and Richmond**

Face a Christmas of marquee light,  
you stood on transplant streets, watched  
grated steam rising eerie, rising slow.

Followed that shudder-still tornado and  
dreamt a secret city in the depths: engines  
boring and you diving weightless, diving low

through granite chasms, through vapour  
wastelands. You saw stalagmites weeping,  
saw black tears oozing wearily below.

A child among the drilling minions  
raised a hand—one finger, one thumb,  
three stumps churning the underglow.

The child became a man, holding out  
that hand for change and you went slack,  
dreamsick, heard yourself muttering no.

You walked away thumbing change – what  
change could sack a secret city, turn fingers  
into lizard tails, help coral labyrinths grow?

Like stitches melting into wounds you saw  
the bridges and the dams dissolve, watched  
concrete wilt, rode the rivers' rage and flow.

## D'VORAH ELIAS

### **Tuesday Morning Sky**

This morning's weather was somewhat bleak.  
Snow fell softly as Yoshi mushed me along the sidewalk  
down to Richmond Street.  
Above, the sky hung low,  
pregnant with trillions of tiny ice crystals  
then opened up and let them loose upon our heads.

There is no fighting in my town today.  
I live far away from Donetsk, Ukraine.

I had a dream about you last night.  
We made love to the sound of machine-gun fire  
in the distance,  
the whistle of falling rocket fire all around.  
Your hands were steady  
as they played up and down my back,  
lighting fuses deep in my belly,  
sending me perilously close to the  
edge  
of what  
God only knows.

I am afraid to love you because  
I am afraid you won't love me in return.  
Terribly insecure  
and too shy to tell you.  
I wrote it in a poem to give you instead.

## **CAMILLE INTSON**

### **McManus**

hey, there's a bulb out on top there and the light  
keeps going on and off and on and off and on and  
(not like i mind, you can't tell with the snow)

#### ANNOUNCEMENT —

NEXT SHOW: 7PM/\$15/ISUPPORT LOCAL ARTISTS!  
tonight, i am a seductress and the heels do not fit  
i curl my hair and kiss a handsome man  
we swallow voices we can't foster  
creationist thirst meets fruitless knowledge  
Adam meets Eve, paradise falls,  
street rats rise like omens  
LTC's proposed a new route through my arteries  
i get lost on public transit, or on side-streets off Dundas  
but most often in body, in semicolonc silence  
i'm putting on my fake eyelashes  
and counting the chairs in the audience  
7PM/\$15/A CLASSIC: REVISITED/  
!COME SEE WHAT WE HERE CAN'T MAKE!  
construction drills through morning  
outside my bedroom loft  
the man in the yellow hat beams in silent oration  
as the leaves fall

i can be anyone, tomorrow  
TIME FOR SHOW, mix wine to woe  
and i will walk upon the snow  
falling past the burnt out bulb, onto all the unknown  
and the unknowing

## MARTIN HAYTER

### **The Elderly Wait in Cherryhill Mall**

Neither hills rise, nor do cherry trees grow,  
but the name evokes youth and fruitfulness,  
spring's pale pink and white flowering trees,  
and securing a partner for a Sunday picnic.  
Elsewhere now dwells the promise of green  
that here only grows in mind, *in memorium*.

In the busy food court at small round tables,  
they gather for hours, like petals of a flower  
to be plucked eventually – chairs left vacant.  
But for now they recount to each other their  
fortunes in love and fortunes in life, moving  
around the table littered with lottery tickets:  
the daisies of “loves me” or “loves me not.”

The absent, whom no one picked, and those  
already plucked from life – leaving partners  
high in the withering solitudes of the concrete  
towers that surround the Mall – don’t scratch  
at the grey patches on lottery tickets with the  
edges of coins, keys, fingernails – don’t wish  
for the magic “three” of strawberries, apples,  
cherries – they find their matches elsewhere.

## WAYNE RAY

### **Hippie Trippie General Store**

for Christina

I don't want to be alone.  
With you around I'm not lonely.  
Never lonesome in your presence.  
Outside my Skinner Box apartment  
life blooms from your store.  
Small animals exist only to enter  
at night for left out food,  
trees and flowers are reflected  
on the walls and front door,  
owner's cheerful face and wide smile  
blow away any thought of a  
neighbourhood sadness or pallor.

For a brief moment or two, I  
may be alone in the store, but  
the music lifts one's spirits and  
ticking of numerous clocks fill  
the ears and the antique aire  
of the overfilled spaces blast  
the eyes awake, God's crazy glued  
open eyelids, no aloneness here.

When, at the end of the long day,  
footsteps fade, money is counted,  
lights are turned off, smiles wane  
and we gather our personal loneliness  
to return to our own homes,

the cheerful owner, hers,  
not to be lonely for we have your smile,  
but to be, all of us, alone until  
tomorrow when you will surely be  
our best friend once again.

## ANDREAS GRIPP

### Hamilton Road

You are the street  
that isn't straight,  
a diagonal  
difficult to drive,  
our views of you  
as slanted  
as the way in which you carry,  
cars that start and stop  
so very often,  
your humble homes  
aligned  
to keep the pace  
with cracking pavement –

*that part of town,  
working-class,*

the air of bread  
pervading,  
Italian, Portuguese,  
pirouetting  
with fish & chips.

Your four lanes  
decree  
you're a major  
artery,

and yet you're robbed  
of going west  
by a sudden, simple bend –  
Horton's name  
the fame at Wellington –

while your coda  
peters out  
at Bathurst St.,  
without warning,  
without the lines of white and gold,  
crooked to its close,

though eastward things are better,  
you snake past river Thames,  
*abruptly* losing the stigma  
of *E.O.A.*,  
the houses even grand  
as you hijack  
Commissioner's route,  
taking credit for its path,  
frolic off to Dorchester,  
Ingersoll,  
maybe mocking all the ones  
who thought to Hamilton  
you'd lead,  
a farmer's field of corn  
bearing the brunt  
of endless cursing.

## **TOM CULL**

### **The Granite into which It Reaches**

We stop at the old Pumphouse,  
look out over the river.

A snapping turtle sunbathes  
on the ruins of the old dam,  
which was once a new dam,  
that replaced an old dam,  
which was once a new dam,  
that replaced an old dam.

The pumphouse pumped  
drinking water from Coomb Springs  
to Londoners before the Lake Huron  
Pipeline replaced it in 1967. We cup  
our hands, look through the gated  
windows – nine metal reindeer  
frozen in perpetual lift-off return  
our gaze. Santa scowls somewhere  
back in the shadows.

We walk on to Storybook Gardens;  
two mink run hunchbacked  
across the bike path, hop rock  
to rock along the river's edge  
then, like granulated brown sugar,  
pour into the Earl-Grey river.  
At the statue of Slippery the Seal,  
we pet his concrete snout, lay our hands  
on his flippers. He arrived at Storybook  
in 1958 to find his habitat half-built –

that night, he slipped out, accordioned his way across the grounds, past the three little bears, past the mice in the hickory, dickory clock. He found the river, waded into fresh water tasting of phenol, cyanide, fecal coliform. Setting his GPS for some unknown rookery off the California coast, he headed west.

The next morning, loud speakers barked, seal talk up and down the river, but Slippery kept slipping, becoming surprise sighting, becoming dog swimming, becoming concerned call from Delaware fisherman, inkblot, headline, \$200 reward.

He dove under bridges down the river, his teeth cracking the backs of bass and trout, and out to Lake St. Clair as far as Sandusky, Ohio, on the banks of Lake Erie, finally bagged nine days later by Toledo zookeepers as he dozed in a boat house near Cedar Point. When Slippery cleared customs, a thousand Canadians met him at the border; fifty thousand Londoners mobbed his homecoming parade.

In the winter of '67, Slippery caught a wicked cold and died. Four men lowered his casket into a shallow grave while old white men with horn-rimmed glasses and fedoras looked on.

In 2012, the park closed down the seal exhibit, rounded up Nunavut, Atlantis, Cri Cri, Peanut, loaded them into an air-conditioned trailer

headed for the St. Louis Zoo.  
Peanut and Atlantis died hours into the trip;  
Cri Cri died the following Wednesday.

Our final stop is the new dam.  
The massive hydraulic cylinders  
look like industrial syringes, plungers pulled out,  
ready to deliver their payload into the heart  
of the watercourse. We arrive late;  
the politician slotted to speak about his plan  
to repurpose the dam into a footbridge  
has given up on us and gone home.  
We look below to the broken gates  
that have remained open for almost a decade  
since malfunctioning on their first attempt.  
“Let the River Flow” is scrawled  
in neon blue on the side of the abutment.

We stand on the dam, face west,  
watch the ruined waters of the Antlered River bleed  
downstream to Chippewa,  
Oneida, Munsee-Delaware Nations.

We too are pulled by the current, the bones  
in our toes elongate, fan out, dig into the  
concrete like jackhammers. Our eyes bulge,  
turn black, we clap our webbed hands, bark  
hoarse benedictions to the water fleeing the city.  
Overhead, a Great Blue Heron wallops  
across the sky in the same direction,  
beak pointed down, like a needle etching  
a record of this day into the vinyl of a darkening night.

## **MARK TOVEY**

### **The Gazebo**

A rustic shelter with a tar paper roof,  
designed to escape the summer heat,  
a beacon of a former time  
open to us neighbourhood kids – or at least to me.

Built of crisscrossed twigs  
and friendly to grape leaves,  
the seats, though hard and wooden,  
perfectly accommodate the bottom.

Sunken into the ground  
attracting the cool of earth,  
a particular delight for children –  
adults must stoop to get inside.

The beneficent figure  
who owned it – perhaps had it built –  
was in her 90s.  
She grew asparagus – "asparagras," she called it.

Inside her house  
was a grandfather clock  
whose tick seemed more silent  
than silence itself.

No photograph by which to remember her,  
only a sample of her handwriting:  
a note re-discovered years later,  
a note I never answered.

I strain across time,  
willing myself – my younger self –  
to answer that note.  
Perhaps these words are that answer.

## KEVIN HESLOP

*The past is not prologue; like the discrete strata  
of Schliemann's sites, it is a mere succession  
of buried presents.*

– Clifford Geertz

If

this city is a Treaty, how many tongues,  
How many lips, how many pairs of lungs  
Have symbiotically obliged its reading?  
How many persons, breath by breath conceding  
Their calligraphy, have signed the living air?  
How many in uncomprehending prayer –  
If our city is a Treaty – haven't signed?  
Maybe somebody thought, "They wouldn't mind,  
Or couldn't think or speak, or wouldn't write."  
And maybe in a way they'd have been right.  
A river, for example, cannot hold  
A pen; its simple work is growing old  
While holding what it can: the lives of geese,  
And little fish, frothy carcinogens,  
And ancient breath, awaiting Release.

## **MARLENE LAPLANTE**

### **Castles are Part of the Dream**

It was just a castle built in a frontier town  
Respected it stood there – pride of many around  
Defending the law and for all that it stood  
Admired by all and 'twas well that it should  
It was majestic, impressive to the many that came  
London's first courthouse at the Fork of the Thames  
This building held many a colourful trial  
Accused Donnelly killers were here for awhile  
And many a hanging this courtyard did see  
The likes of Brown, and Cornelius Burley  
Who was the first – his hanging took two tries  
His skull displayed throughout the land, attracted many eyes  
And they hanged from Texas, Mr. Peg Leg Brown  
He put a curse on his grave, his ghost still comes around  
He swore that grass would never grow over his grave  
His predictions were right 'cause now it's been paved  
Phoebe Campbell was famous, first woman hanged they say  
Postcards told the story to remember that day  
There were others made famous for deeds they had done  
But once convicted, they were hanged one by one  
This courthouse brought many to its bench and its bar  
And records of history recognize who they are  
It has always been a place to protect and defend  
The rights of the people found here within  
Take a walk in your city to the Fork of the Thames  
Stare up at the castle, feel the history it claims  
It is a very old building; it has stories to tell  
It is part of our past and the law it upheld  
This courthouse replaced by one larger and new  
But the foundation of a castle is the reason it grew  
For sometimes our visions are more than they seem  
And maybe this castle was part of a dream

## FRANK BELTRANO

### **The Names of the Numbered Things** (for the anniversary of Eldon House)

In another life  
I have stood  
in rooms like these  
facing things  
that now are numbered  
now are dated  
things may be catalogued  
whose pasts are calculated:  
long box clocks  
four poster beds  
porcelain dolls  
tin toys  
a travelling tub  
Delft tiles  
silver cutlery  
Victorian chinoiserie  
tea pots and kettles  
tusks and antlers  
pitchers and bowls  
none of these are novel  
to me now

I have come for a visit  
I have come  
with a pocket full  
of poetry

or at least these paltry  
three lines:

- 1) I am in love with the interpreter
- 2) her young body wrapped in calico and lace
- 3) is a time machine

I mean her no disgrace  
it is people  
that make these numbered  
things survive  
it is people  
that make them  
more than names  
come alive

**GREGORY WM. GUNN**

**At the Café**

Sophisticated patterned  
porcelain  
fills the ambience.

Stems of spoons tap sides  
of bowls & rims of mugs  
reach over to bistro tables.

A society of dinnerware,  
steam auras rising  
throughout the air

ensuring & assuring  
again the diversified  
mannered hands  
encompassing them.

They all call  
for avian pittances  
that won't take flight.

Temperate tea & coffee,  
Bear claws & biscuits,  
  
a palpable bell, a tiny  
terrestrial land  
of milk & honey.

## PENN KEMP

### Celebrating Tree in Souwesto

Mother trees surround us, the very  
few left over from original forest we  
long paved over, old rotten stumps  
that settlers burnt to clear their land.

Here's to the trees that celebrate soul!  
We celebrate their spectacular presence.  
Here's to Sugar Maple and Chanticleer  
Pear, turning burnt orange in Fall.  
And the Hickory I climbed as a girl  
on Medway Farm, lying astride  
one long branch intertwined by  
all those saplings vying for light.  
The three Birch in our front lawn,  
planted when we moved here some  
sixty-five years ago, growing old along-  
side, dropping our fireplace kindling.  
The Oak above Pond Mills hidden  
on a hillside of younger upstarts.  
The Beech behind Attawandaron  
where October puffball might pop.

The Black Spruce and Tamarack  
that whisk us into clearer northern  
air as we walk through Sifton Bog  
like winds that wind along each limb.

\*\*\*

Trees we have known are trees we  
can meet by species. Once connected,  
always familiar, old friends to greet  
on any city street or in deep woods

if we can slow down long enough to  
salute the Tree of Life in each. Light  
candelabra of Catalpa, Horse Chestnut,  
Pine, Balsam Fir, Juniper or Cedar cone.

Sing a litany of names that belong here.  
Alder, Balm of Gilead, Willow galore.  
Glorious Maple, Butternut, sad slips of  
Elm, even intrusive Buckthorn now.

Celebrate those graceful interlopers,  
the Carolinians (Redbud, Tulip Tree,  
magnificent Magnolia) sheltering here  
at comfort's edge in Snowbelt country.

Here's to lacey Walnut, Honey Locust,  
whose canopies carry us off to African  
plains: Acacia giraffes might browse  
or Le Douanier paint above his lion.

Sycamore is our memory tree, shedding  
its bark like arbutus, its winter silhouette  
a ghostly skeleton, reminiscent of that  
other London's Plane-shaded streets.

Trees know their season, their reason for being. How each tree reaches out to become World Tree. We have so much to learn from not living on but with our place.

We who live in this Forest City must ensure a name never replaces the reality of canopy. Long may our trees flourish for we can only prosper with our elder brothers, our mothers.

## ANDREAS GRIPP

### **Lesbian of the Thames**

Why do they abhor you,  
for finding the tender feeling  
of sameness?  
Why would you want the other:  
the drunkard, the dullard,  
the angry clenched-fisted,  
the ugly-to-look-at-nude?

There are places of touch  
in a woman,  
a velvet of skin and of voice,  
that are unattainable in man  
(and that suits you just fine).

Consider how you are  
in making love:  
it's yourself that you caress,  
it's a mirror that's above you,  
her name a thing of beauty,  
not like *Bob, Fred, Hector*,  
and the other slovenly louts  
who would *only* seek  
to own you.

I see you there,  
by the Thames,

between the willows  
and Pentecostals  
passing tracts that burn  
with fire,

holding her hand  
along the curves  
of your breasts  
and hips,  
winding in a way  
that only a river  
and a woman possibly can,

a fruit  
no tree of knowledge  
can ever take from you  
again.

## WAYNE RAY

### **There's A Poem Here**

for Catherine Inculet 1957-2015

There's a poem here.  
Catherine, it's been forty-five days  
since I last saw your face.  
I've been busy on your behalf;  
the Will, the theatrics, the Wake,  
so I haven't had time to grieve.

I recently read your poems,  
your rants and raves and blogs,  
seen your photos, the hoarding, plays.  
I said to myself yesterday,  
there's a poem here.

Today I read with wonder  
your public school notebooks, and  
your smile, you know the one  
on all the photos taken  
at your short-lived wedding,  
shone from every handwritten page.

So much life ahead of you.  
So much innocent childhood joy.  
I could see your future paths expand  
before me on each and every page;  
daughter, humanitarian, lawyer, lover, thespian.  
There is a book here, after I grieve.

## **BRITTANY RENAUD**

### **Western Fair Moments**

The smell of fresh bread baked  
under heat lamps  
carries a hint of salt,  
recalling to me childhood beachside adventures –  
except I bite in and it's cold.

Three deep fried, red velvet Oreos,  
and a burger wrapped in bacon  
make my supper.

My friend hands me  
a large chunk of her cotton candy  
nonchalantly.  
It melts in my mouth  
and then everything becomes sticky.

I receive a small orange-red monkey  
with lopsided eyes,  
won in a calculated water gun battle,  
accompanied by a soft blue star.  
The monkey is named Mikey,  
after the victor.

Doll faces cut away from their bodies,  
merge to create a hat  
covered in eyes that follow, this gelatinous blob  
at an art exhibition.  
No ribbon.

I'm on a ski lift-like ride with my boyfriend.  
We were told beforehand  
that cell phones are forbidden  
because last year  
someone dropped one  
on the head of a four year old girl.

Riding *Extreme* at a speed  
that causes the world to be snapshots,  
loose under restraints,  
falling up as the pendulum swings down.

I'm sitting on a ride,  
a young girl I don't know faces me  
while the ride swings up and down,  
up and down  
until it's upside down.  
I feel something wet fall on me.  
I see the young girl has been crying  
and hope only tears landed on me.

I wait with two friends for *Mach 3*;  
we are aged and jaded  
in our twenties and thirties.  
In front of us we see  
teenagers constantly  
hopping the barrier and line jumping  
while one boy calls another a pussy  
because he's afraid to ride.

I look around and see  
prepubescent faces  
surrounding me.  
Am I too old to be here  
as I hear Alyssa Reid  
or a youth talent search  
in my ear?  
No.

I hear that a log flume  
will be coming next year.

## CARRIE LEE CONNEL

### This London is not That London

Christopher Wren did not design our St. Paul's.  
The Delta Armouries is a shade  
smaller than Buckingham Palace.  
City Hall pales in its '60s modernity  
to the new space-age building  
near the other Thames.

The castle on the hill  
is an Ivory tower of cap and gown prestige,  
the ruler paid a king's ransom.

The majesty of Windsor Castle, Kensington Palace,  
and Hampton Court  
is not mirrored by Windermere Manor,  
Elsie Perrin Estate, or Silverwood Mansion.

Our Soho aspires to gentrification  
while theirs is flamboyant in rainbows.

Kingsmill's has retired  
but Harrods marches on.

Shopping on chic Richmond Row  
is no comparison to vintage Carnaby Street:  
Layman House evaporated long ago.

A quick walk around the block of Victoria Park  
is a pallid substitute for a Sunday afternoon Regent's  
stroll.

The London Zoo houses thousands of animals  
yet Storybook Gardens let a seal slip by.  
No bears named Via share  
the limelight with Paddington.

Our haze of allergens,  
trapped in the bowl of landscape,  
is as blinding for some as their pea soup fog.  
This Covent Garden still boasts  
farm fresh vegetables and lov-er-ly flowers.  
Our double-decker serves ice cream  
to the hot and harried.  
How strange for island Londoners  
to happen upon social media events  
only to be informed that  
land-locked London is groovier by far.

## RYAN GIBBS

### **Back to the River**

I arrive at The Forks  
along its divided trails  
a stranger races past  
running to his own rhythm  
padded headphones tuning out  
rushing water  
and leaden traffic

lying down on fresh-cut grass  
I envision  
panoptic terraces  
illuminated canopies  
bustling piazzas  
the new gateway to the Thames

but I come from the St. Clair  
where the river  
serves a natural boundary  
between nations  
and First Nations protest  
petrochemical contamination  
at Aamjiwnaang

I have also visited Nyhavn  
where enchanted waters  
inspired Andersen's fairy tales  
and foreigners come to share  
in a common childhood

often I dream of Copenhagen  
to escape  
the warm quietus of Sarnia  
the cold vibrancy of London

the Danes understood  
to build a city  
you must first build a river

## HOLLY PAINTER

### My City

I want to write an apology letter to the world.  
A carefully crafted confessional note  
saying that though I am aware  
there are beautiful cities blanketing the globe,  
there is one city,  
unequivocally,  
that is meant to be my home.

So send an *I'm sorry* to New York,  
pen my apologies to Paris,  
for my love affair is permanent  
and cannot be undone.  
My heart belongs  
completely,  
compassionately,  
to London.

Chalk my devotion up to more than  
where my family tree has grown its roots,  
for the truth to finding home  
is not always where you have come from  
but where you want to go,  
and I know here I can take flight  
without ever leaving the ground,  
for this town has todays full of opportunities  
and possibilities seeping from its tomorrows.

It is true not every day or decision  
is going to be perfect,  
but there are those with visions  
that can change this place  
and those people  
can be us.

We can be this city's skyscrapers,  
collecting stardust under our fingernails  
and sunlight stains on our palms,  
reaching for the ceiling of impossible,  
bursting through the rooftops of inconceivable  
and the attics of unreasonable,  
then shining like the very stars  
we have scratched at  
because it doesn't matter  
that we are only a few amongst a crowd,  
we can make this place  
incredible for those around us.

We can create a town  
that sounds like a symphony  
and looks like a masterpiece,  
half the battle  
is just in the belief  
that such a thing is possible.

So see every streetlight as a spotlight,  
every sidewalk as a stage,  
every brick wall as a canvas,

and every challenge as a chance to play  
the part of an artist,  
sculpting this city into something amazing  
one block at a time.

We may not be able to change the whole world  
but we can change the worlds of some within it,  
so join me in saying I'm not so sorry after all.

I'm here to shape my city  
and honestly,  
the sky's the limit.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Frank Beltrano** is an active member of the London poetry community. He regularly attends readings in the *Poetry London* series and often reads at the Open Mic at Mykonos restaurant. He also co-facilitates a writing workshop called *the Writers' Eye View*, encouraging adults to write poems and prose regularly. For the past four years he has lead a week-long poetry writing retreat to Bayfield. This year the group went all the way to Rimouski, Quebec, to be by the sea and write poetry.

**Stan Burfield** is the founder and organizer of *London Open Mic Poetry*, a monthly reading series hosted by Mykonos Restaurant. He lives in London with his wife, Linda.

**Carrie Lee Connel** is a writer of fiction and the author of two books of poetry, the latest being *Persona Grata*, published in 2016 by Harmonia Press. She lives in London with her husband and two cats, Mila and Mabel.

**Tom Cull** teaches American Studies and Creative Writing at Western University. He has served as a board member for *WordsFest*, London's literary arts festival, as well as the *Urban League* and *Back to the River*, a monthly riverbank cleanup of the Thames River. He's been a committee member and workshop facilitator for *Poetry London* and was named Poet Laureate for the City of London in 2016. He lives in London with his partner, Miriam, and their six-year-old son.

**D'vorah Elias** is a Jewish writer, poet, and playwright. She is the author of a memoir, *Communion at One O'clock*, as well as a recent book of poetry, *Ani*. She lives in London with her dog, Yoshi.

**Jan Figurski** is a London poet, the author of several chapbooks, and can often be found gallivanting across the globe.

**Ryan Gibbs** lives in London and is pursuing a Ph.D. at Western University. He is an English professor at Lambton College in nearby Sarnia. His poetry has appeared in the anthologies *Under the Mulberry Tree: Poems for & about Raymond Souster* and *Whisky Sour City: Poems from the South Shore*.

**Andreas Gripp** has released 21 books of poetry as well a number of chapbooks through Harmonia Press. His latest collection is *Selected Poems 2000-2016*. He works in a used bookstore and lives in London with his wife, Carrie, and their two cats.

**Gregory Wm. Gunn** is the author of 10 books of poetry. His latest, scheduled for an Autumn 2016 release, is called *Airs of Deception*. He lives and writes in Byron.

**Martin Hayter** is a poet, counsellor and psychotherapist living in London. He was also a founding member of the *London Open Mic Poetry Night* series at Mykonos.

**Kevin Heslop** is an English major at Western University. He has led poetry workshops for *Poetry London* and currently interviews the featured poets for *London Open Mic Poetry* at Mykonos. He has been drawn to the works of Charles Bukowski, Ernest Hemingway, Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Neitzsche, as well as the paintings of Vincent Van Gogh and Pablo Picasso and the music of J.S. Bach and Miles Davis.

**David Huebert** is the author of the poetry collection *We Are No Longer The Smart Kids In Class*. His poetry has appeared in journals such as *Event*, *CV2*, *Matrix*, and *The Antigonish Review*. Recent poetry is forthcoming in *Grain* and *Prairie Fire*. David's story, "Enigma," won the 2016 CBC Short Story Prize.

**Camille Intson** is a Liberal arts student at Western University, presently majoring in English Literature and Theatre Studies.

**Penn Kemp** was London's inaugural Poet Laureate from 2010-2012. As Writer-in-Residence for Western University (2009-2010), her project was the DVD, *Luminous Entrance: a Sound Opera for Climate Change Action* (Pendas Productions). Forthcoming is a new collection of poetry from Quattro Books, *Barbaric Cultural Practice*, as well as a play, *The Triumph of Teresa Harris* (Palace Theatre, March 2017).

**Marlene Laplante** has been writing poetry for the past ten years, and is a regular reader at *London Open Mic Poetry Night*.

**Alan Leangvan** began writing poetry for a talent show in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, which he won. Since then, he has become heavily involved in London's spoken word scene, representing the city at national slam competitions in Vancouver and Winnipeg in 2016.

**Lincoln McCardle** is a father, husband, interpretive dancer, and self-described Canucklehead. He is somewhat of a local celebrity on Twitter.

**dImorrow** began writing as a teen. She was first published as a poet in 1978 in the *University of Toronto Review*. Since that time, her poetry and prose (as Diane Lynn Morrow) has appeared in *Scarborough Fair VI*, *Rampike*, *Island Skies*, *Recovery's Reckoning* and a chapbook of her poetry entitled *Eighteen Poems-Plus-One*, co-published in 2004 by the London chapter of the Canadian Poetry Association and HMS Press.

**Dorothy Nielsen** was born in Indiana, grew up in Windsor, and is presently a professor of literature and writing at King's University College. Her first book of poetry, *The Persephone Papers*, was published by Harmonia Press in 2013. She lives in London with her husband and their son.

**Holly Painter** is a spoken word artist, public speaker, and certified teacher who has spoken to over thirty thousand youth at school and community events and performed on stages across the country. Holly is an Artist in Residence with the Thames Valley District School Board, a three-time Grand Slam Champion and Director of the London Poetry Slam, the National Director of Spoken Word Canada, and testament to the fact that your biggest fear can become your greatest passion. Her website can be found at [hollypainterpoetry.com](http://hollypainterpoetry.com)

**Wayne Ray** was born in Alabama and spent most of his early years in Newfoundland until moving to Woodstock, Ontario in 1965. Wayne is the founder of HMS Press and co-founder of the Canadian Poetry Association. He helped establish the London Arts Council and was the President of the London New Arts Festival in 1999. Wayne is the author of 18 books and chapbooks of poetry, fiction and non-fiction.

**R L Raymond** tells stories. He is the author of 4 books of poetry including *Half Myths & Quarter Legends* (Epic Rites Press). He is the founder of PigeonBike Press and his work has appeared in a variety of literary journals including *Existere, Descant, Grain, Carousel*, and *The Prairie Journal*. His website can be found at [www.RLRaymond.ca](http://www.RLRaymond.ca)

**Brittany Renaud** has been an active member of both the London Open Mic Poetry Series as well as a regular participant of the London Poetry Slam. She grew up in Chatham and is presently studying creative writing at Western University. Her dog is a boxer named “Rocky.”

**Peggy Roffey** recently retired from her roles as Assistant Professor at Western University’s English Department as well as Director of Learning and Development. Peggy’s Master’s Thesis was entitled *Colleen Thibaudeau’s Big Sea Vision*. She is presently the Parish Life Coordinator and a Sunday School Teacher at St. James Westminster Anglican Church in Wortley Village.

**Mark Tovey** received his Ph.D. in Cognitive Science at Carleton University. His interests include the theatre history of London, Ontario. He co-founded GarrisonTheatricals.com, which offers opportunities to appreciate London’s theatrical past. With the support of the *London Heritage Council*, Garrison Theatricals staged a play at the *Fanshawe Pioneer Village*, as it might have been performed by the Officers of the London Garrison in 1842.

**David White** is a Professor of Theatre History and Writing at Fanshawe College. His collection of poems, *The Lark Ascending*, will be published by Pedlar Press in March 2017.

## NOTES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An earlier version of *The Hart of London* by Penn Kemp was published in *Windsor Review: Special Alice Munro Issue*, Fall 2014. An earlier version of *Celebrating Tree in Souwesto* by Penn Kemp was published online at [www.reforestlondon.ca](http://www.reforestlondon.ca)

*And that was the day: cross currents everywhichway* by Peggy Roffey was written to mark the day June 6, 2016.

dlmorrow's *Ode to a Tree* and Wordsworth's "little cottage girl" contains an unintentional parallel between lines 32 and 48 of Wordsworth's 1798 poem, "We are Seven" (*The Complete Poetical Works of Wordsworth*, Cambridge Edition, 1932, p. 73) and the opening scene of this poem, hence its title.

*The Names of the Numbered Things* by Frank Beltrano was originally published in *Possessions: The Eldon House Poems*, edited by Christine Walde and Cornelia Hoogland and published jointly by Museum London and Poetry London.

*Decade* was originally published in *The Persephone Papers*, by Dorothy Nielsen (Harmonia Press, 2013).

*At the Café* and *The Following* were originally published in *Parallactic Visions*, by Gregory Wm. Gunn (Lulu Press, 2013).

*It's a Simpsons' Sky, Beacon, and This London is not That London* are also published in *Persona Grata*, by Carrie Lee Connel (Harmonia Press, 2016).

*Hamilton Road* was originally published in *Holy Rollers*, by Andreas Gripp (Harmonia Press, 2015). *Lesbian of the Thames* is also published in *Selected Poems 2000-2016*, by Andreas Gripp (Harmonia Press 2016).

# Harmonia Press

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ISBN 978-1-927734-11-7

\$15.00